Sugar prices

811. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether with the onset of festival season the sugar prices are still ruling high in the retail market;

(b) whether Government has asked sugar mills to start releasing extra sugar under free sale quota and the two million tonnes buffer stocks sale permitted by Government; and

(c) whether the present scarcity of sugar in open market is caused by hoarding, speculative activity and the mills reneging on their free sale quota?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Central Government released additional quota of 5 lac tons of non-levy sugar – 3 lac tons for the month of August, 2008 and 2 lac tons for the month of September, 2008. Further, the Central Government also allowed producers of sugar to sell dismantled buffer stock of 20 lac tons (dismantled on 01.05.2008) in the domestic market by 30th September, 2008 without the requirement of release orders of the Central Government.

(c) There is no scarcity of sugar in the country and sugar is adequately available in the market.

Increase in prices of foodgrains

812. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has been seized of the incidences of high increase in prices of foodgrains and other items of common consumption consistently during the last four years;

(b) if so, whether Government have been seized of the substantial erosion of the purchasing power, particularly of the agricultural and industrial labourers, daily wage earners in unorganized sectors as a consequence thereof;

(c) if so, whether Planning Commission has conducted any review of their parameters which determine poverty level in the light thereof with a view to up-date the same;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Government is aware of the increase in prices of some essential commodities during the last four years.

(b) (i) The Consumer Price Index Numbers can indicate the change in purchasing power of the consumers. All-India Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers on base 1982=100 for the period January, 2003 to December, 2005 and on base 2001=100 for the period from January, 2006 to August, 2008 are as under:

Year/Month	Base 1982=100			Base 2001=100*		
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
January	483	504	526	119	127	134
February	484	504	525	119	128	135
March	487	504	525	119	127	137
April	493	504	529	120	128	138
May	494	508	527	121	129	139
June	497	512	529	123	130	140
July	501	517	538	124	132	143
August	499	522	540	124	133	145
September	499	523	542	125	133	
October	503	526	548	127	134	
November	504	525	553	127	134	
December	502	521	550	127	134	

* The All-India Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers on base 2001=100 can be converted to base 1982=100 by multiplying the figure with Linking Factor 4.63 and rounding off the result to nearest whole number.

(ii) All-India Consumer Price Index Numbers for Agricultural Labourers on Base 1986-87=100 for the period January, 2003 to March, 2008 are as under:

Year/Month	Base 1986-87=100					
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
January	320	332	341	357	391	413
February	322	332	340	357	392	417
March	324	332	340	358	392	423
April	326	331	341	360	394	429
May	327	333	343	365	395	431
June	330	336	345	370	399	434
July	331	338	350	372	404	442
August	331	341	352	375	408	450
September	332	343	354	380	410	455
October	333	345	356	386	413	
November	333	344	360	390	414	
December	332	342	358	390	413	

(c) and (d) The Planning Commission estimates the percentage and number of persons living below the poverty line at national and State level in rural and urban areas from the large sample survey on household consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years and an exogenously defined poverty line. The State-specific rural poverty lines are updated using State-specific Consumer Price Index of Agricultural Labourers (CPIAL) and the State-specific urban poverty lines are updated using the State-specific Consumer Price Index of Industrial Workers (CPIIW) following the methodology contained in the Report of the Expert Group of Estimation of Proportion and Number of Poor.

(e) Does not arise.

Food security authority

813. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up Food Security Authority to ensure availability of food to all and other matters;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) The required system of governance already in place is adequate to address the issues of Food Security.

Allocation of rice to Andhra Pradesh under TPDS

814. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of rice allocated and lifted by the State of Andhra Pradesh under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in the last five years, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that last year the allocation of rice to State has been reduced by 5,37,060 MT;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any request has been made by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for restoration of the above quantity of rice; and

(e) if so, the details of the action Government has taken on this request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) Details on the quantities of rice allocated to Andhra Pradesh and its offtake by the State Government during the last 5 years are given in the Statement (*See* below). The allocation of foodgrains including rice under Targeted Public